ENVIRONMENTAL WATER ACCOUNT

DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT/
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

APPENDIX D

Fish Decision Trees

Table 2 The Delta Smelt Decision Tree

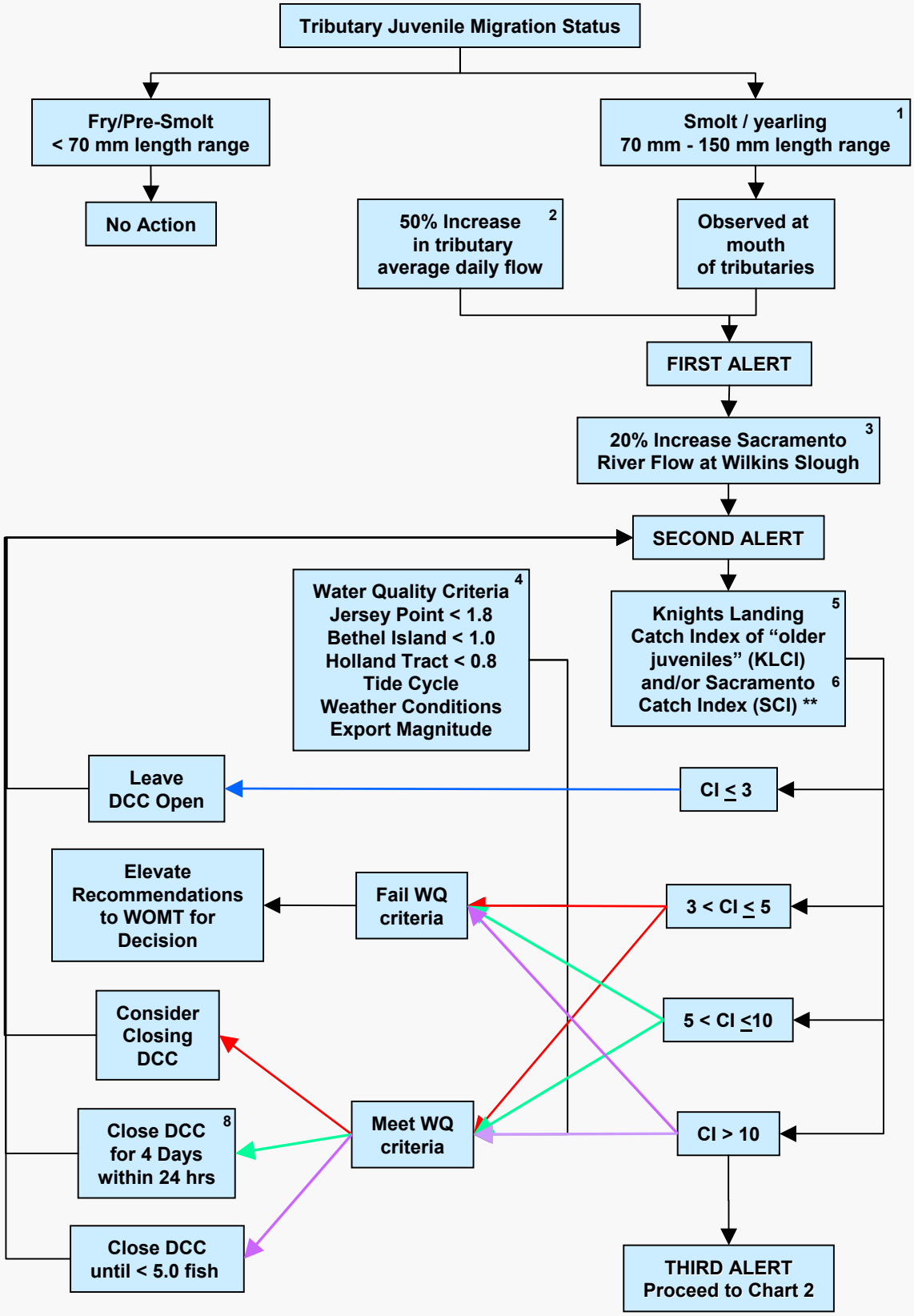
Life stage	Adults
Timing	Pre-VAMP (February 1 through April 15)
Concerns	1) High relative densities of adults in the south Delta are a concern due to the potential for increase entrainment at the SWP and CVP.
	2) High relative densities of delta smelt in the south Delta also suggest spawning may occur in the south Delta, increasing the chances for exceeding the red light level[a] of incidental take in the late spring and early summer.
Data of interest	Before pre-VAMP, consider fall midwater trawl indices
	Spring midwater trawl
	Salvage
	Beach seine
	Chipps Island trawl
	Hydrology (wet or dry year; placement of X2)
	Water quality conditions and water temperature
	Condition of the fish
Assessment of conditions	Adult distribution in Delta and downstream of the Delta
	Salvage levels/densities, yellow light
	Potential high numbers in juvenile salvage if high numbers of adults are concentrated in the south Delta
Tools for change	Reduction in exports, either concurrently at both facilities or at the facility that is salvaging the most fish
Biological questions using the available data	1) Is the adult distribution broad or not?
	2) Is salvage elevated or not?
	3) Is previous FMWT index high or low?
	4) Are water quality conditions (e.g. water temperatures) conducive to spawning?
	5) Are fish ripe for spawning? (Both of above may help determine if there will be a protracted spawn.)
Questions concerning operations	1) Is there a need to reduce exports at either or both facilities based on either the distribution of adults and/or an increase in the salvage of adult delta smelt?
	2) Is it likely to be a difficult spring or summer? That is, do we expect high levels of delta smelt salvage in the spring or summer?
Assessment of concern	I. If the stated recovery criteria index is lower than 239, then concern is high.
	II. If distribution information shows adults delta smelt are concentrated in the south and central Delta, then concern is high.
	III. If the observed or predicted salvage of adults increases sharply, then concern is high.
	IV. If fish at the salvage facilities are on the verge of spawning and temperatures are conducive to spawning, then concern is high.
Recommendations	A) If concern is high and salvage increases abruptly, then recommendations for action is likely.
	B) If the observed or predicted salvage is at or approaching the red light or at the yellow light, then a recommendation for action is likely.
	C) If assessments II and I are true, then we expect a difficult spring or summer (June and July).
Life stage	Larvae
Timing	VAMP (April 15 through May 15)
Concerns	High numbers of larvae in the south Delta will likely result in higher numbers of fish rearing to juvenile stages and higher levels of entrainment.
Data of interest	Light traps surveys
	20-mm survey[b]
	Water temperatures
	Salvage[c]
	Hydrology (wet or dry year; placement of X2)
Assessment of conditions	Spawning distribution
	Percent distribution

[a] Yellow light and red light as defined in the 1995 OCAP opinion.
[b] If fortnightly 20-mm survey is occurring and red light occurs, then effort will increase to weekly sampling.
[c] Salvage levels at this time will likely not reflect the number of delta smelt in the south Delta, since smelt begin to be counted at the salvage facilities at about 25 mm.
[d] The barriers shall be operated as stated in the USFWS biological opinion (1-1-96-F-53), April 26, 1996.
[e] Changes considered under “a” and “b” would aim to increase net positive flows in Old and Middle rivers downstream of the export facilities.

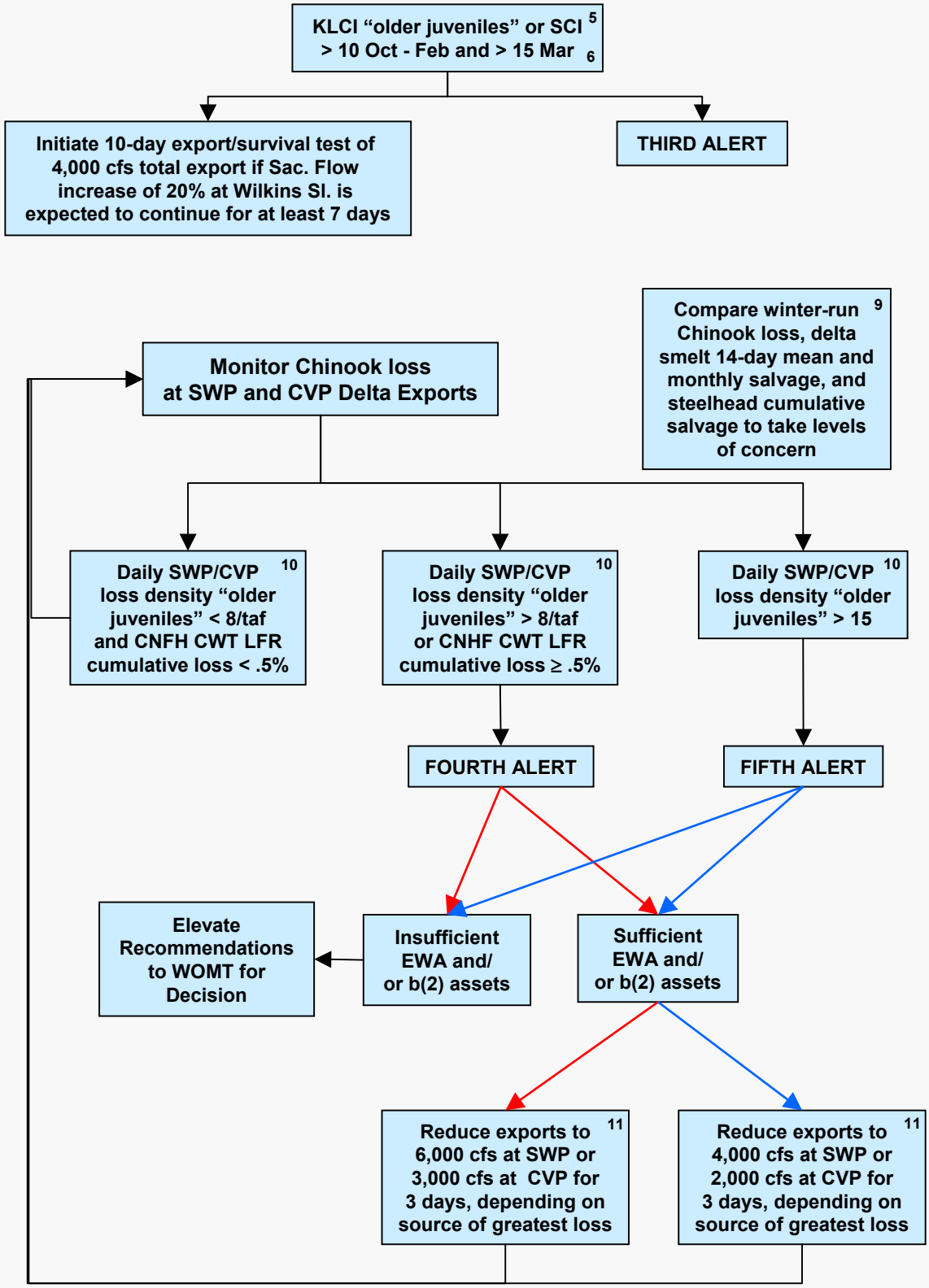
Table 2 The Delta Smelt Decision Tree (Continued)

Assessment of conditions (continued)	Timing: start and duration of spawning
	Implement model to predict future salvage (end of VAMP)
	Water quality conditions, water temperature
Tools for change	Change in San Joaquin River flows
	Change in export reductions (1–3 = net flow)
	Change in barrier operations
Biological questions using the available data	1) Is distribution of spawning broad or restricted?
	2) Is larval distribution broad or restricted?
	3) When does spawning start?
	4) Do we expect punctuated or protracted spawning?
	5) Do we expect SWP and CVP to reach red light salvage levels?
Questions concerning operations	Do we consider changing net flows in Old and Middle rivers?
Assessment of concern	I. If light trap results demonstrates that spawning has occurred in the south Delta, then concern is high
	II. If the 20-mm survey shows 50% of the delta smelt are in the zone of influence (e.g,. east of the confluence), then concern is high.
	III. If abundance in the 20-mm survey is low relative to other years, then concern is high.
	IV. If substantial larval recruitment is expected to occur in the south and central Delta post-VAMP, then concern is high
Recommendation	If concern is high and salvage is at or approaching red light or at yellow light, then recommendations to improve net flow in Old and Middle Rivers are likely. (This recommendation applies during VAMP and post-VAMP, although the tool used will vary.)
Life stage	Juveniles
Timing	Post-VAMP (May 15 through July 1)
Concerns	High numbers of delta smelt juveniles in the south and central Delta will likely result in increased entrainment when export levels increase at the end of VAMP
Data of interest	20-mm survey[b]
	Salvage
	Summer townet
	Hydrology (wet or dry year; placement of X2)
	Export rates
Assessment of conditions	Percent of the distribution outside the zone of influence (e.g., east and west of the confluence)
	Salvage level (number)
	Salvage density
Tools for change	Change in exports
	Change in agricultural barrier operations[d]
	Removal of HORB[d]
	Position of cross-channel gates
	Flow changes in San Joaquin, Old, and Middle rivers
Biological questions using the available data	1) What is the relative distribution in and outside the zone of influence (e.g. upstream and downstream of the confluence)?
	2) Is abundance high?
	3) Is salvage at or approaching red light or at yellow light?
	4) Are fish migrating west from the Delta?
Questions concerning operations	1) Do we consider changing exports?[e]
	2) Do we consider changing agricultural barrier/HORB operations?[e]
	3) Do we consider changing the position of the cross channel gates after May 20?
Assessment of concern	I. If the 20-mm survey shows 50% of the delta smelt are in the zone of influence (e.g. east of the confluence), then concern is high.
	II. If abundance in the 20-mm survey is low, relative to other years, then concern is high.
Recommendation	If concern is high and salvage is at or near red light, then recommendation for action is likely.

[a] Yellow light and red light as defined in the 1995 OCAP opinion.
[b] If fortnightly 20-mm survey is occurring and red light occurs, then effort will increase to weekly sampling.
[c] Salvage levels at this time will likely not reflect the number of delta smelt in the south Delta, since smelt begin to be counted at the salvage facilities at about 25 mm.
[d] The barriers shall be operated as stated in the USFWS biological opinion (1-1-96-F-53), April 26, 1996.
[e] Changes considered under "a" and "b" would aim to increase net positive flows in Old and Middle rivers downstream of the export facilities.



2002/2003 Chinook decision process October through March (Chart 1 of 2).



2002/2003 Chinook decision process October through March (Chart 2 of 2).